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CHILDREN'S BUREAU

MONTHLY RELIEF BULLETIN -- JANUARY, 1932

Foreword

This is the first of a new series of monthly bulletins presenting current statistics of relief to families and to transient and homeless persons in 136 cities, including 88 cities with more than 100,000 population and 48 cities with 50,000 to 100,000 population. It represents an amalgamation of the statistics on relief hitherto collected and published by the Russell Sage Foundation for 76 cities with a population of more than 100,000, and the statistics on relief and transient care compiled monthly since September, 1930, by the Children's Bureau at the request of the President's Organization for Unemployment Relief. In order that the experience of the Russell Sage Foundation might be retained under the new plan, Dr. Ralph G. Hurlin, Director of the Foundation's Department of Statistics, has been appointed by the Children's Bureau as consultant in social statistics, and Anne E. Geddes of that department has been appointed a full-time member of the Children's Bureau staff for a period of six months to direct the development of the combined series.

Publication of the January bulletin has been delayed by the reorganization, but it is hoped that the bulletins will be issued promptly in future. In addition to the monthly publications it is planned to issue a quarterly bulletin which will contain more complete figures than are available at the time the monthly bulletins are prepared.

ANALYSIS OF RELIEF IN JANUARY, 1932

By Anne E. Geddes

Less than Usual Seasonal Increase in January Relief.

Deficiency of funds in some cities, combined with failure of winter relief plans to become fully effective in others, accounts for a less than normal seasonal rise between December and January in the volume of relief disbursed. This statement is based on data of 917 agencies or divisions of public departments reporting relief given. These organizations comprise most, though not all, of the important relief-giving agencies in 124 cities of more than 50,000 population. In January these agencies distributed $22,302,792 in outright and wage relief, as compared with $21,843,116 in December and only $14,097,399 in January of the previous year. Outright relief alone declined 3 per cent from December, but this decline was compensated for by a rise of 11 per cent in the payrolls of work-relief organizations. From the experience of previous years, a sharp increase in total relief was anticipated.

Greater Increase in Families Aided than in Relief Given.

Reports on both number of families aided and amount of relief given were received from 768 agencies. In January, 1932, these agencies disbursed $13,643,814 for the relief of 676,651 families. While the amount of relief declined 3 per cent from the previous month, the number of families aided increased 7 per cent, a further indication of the stringency of resources available for relief.

Most Groups, Including Emergency Committees, Show Decline in Relief.

Examination of Table 1 on the following page shows curtailment from December to January in the expenditures of six classes of outright-relief agencies, including the emergency committees. Slight rise between the two months is recorded by the general public departments and old-age offices. Relief of the nonsectarian family societies rose 5 per cent and that of the Catholic agencies, 18 per cent.

The decline in the total relief of the public veterans' departments is wholly due to the influence of a single large agency, the New York Department of Public Welfare, which cut its payments to veterans from $634,294 in December to $130,164 in January. Had this department been omitted from the tabulation, the veterans' group would have shown an increase of 5 per cent over December in the amount of relief disbursed. This serves to illustrate the excessive influence which may be exerted on the aggregate figures by a single large organization. The weighting of this department, however, is not great enough to affect appreciably the aggregate figures for the total group of agencies.

(continued on page 3)

Table 1. - Number of families aided and amount of relief given in January, 1932, and comparison with January, 1931, and December, 1931

917 agencies or divisions of departments in 124 cities of 50,000 or more population

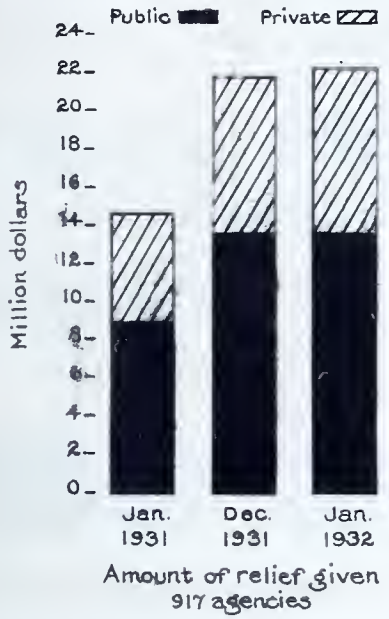
Type of agency	Number of agencies	Families aided			Amounts given			Per cent change from December, 1931, to January, 1932		Per cent change from January, 1931 to January, 1932	
		January 1931	December 1931	January 1932	January 1931	December 1931	January 1932	Families	Amounts	Families	Amounts
Agencies reporting both families and amounts											
Outright relief											
Public departments											
General relief 1/	91	168,769	228,405	258,895	$4,144,561	$5,107,774	$5,222,682	13	2	53	26
Veterans' relief 2/	31	19,064	34,040	27,346	580,365	1,201,490	727,724	-20	-39	43	25
Special-allowance groups											
Mothers' aid	90	35,608	41,655	42,273	1,592,200	1,963,339	1,942,123	1	-1	19	22
Old-age aid	24	14,904	35,462	36,804	468,385	1,031,154	1,060,814	4	3	147	126
Aid for the blind 3/	26	4,366	5,925	4,694	101,829	212,399	99,937	-	-	8	-2
Private agencies 4/											
Nonsectarian family societies	117	99,233	161,406	186,044	1,482,446	2,813,502	2,941,689	15	5	87	98
Jewish agencies	70	8,251	10,146	10,634	293,864	355,291	350,519	5	-1	29	19
Catholic agencies	48	15,458	15,956	19,767	200,714	238,833	281,964	24	18	28	40
Veterans' agencies	91	6,223	7,370	7,113	76,494	87,851	86,709	-3	-1	14	13
Emergency committees	15	9,688	23,070	30,413	82,360	575,771	511,377	32	-11	214	521
Salvation Army 5/	87	48,298	53,395	38,644	222,183	322,757	279,114	-	-14	-	26
Other	78	12,679	13,096	14,024	135,455	139,653	139,162	7	0	11	3
Total, exclusive of special-allowances and Salvation Army	6/ 541	339,365	493,489	554,236	$6,996,259	$10,520,165	$10,261,826	12	-2	63	47
Total	6/ 768	442,541	629,926	676,651	$9,380,856	$14,049,814	$13,643,814	7	-3	53	45
Agencies reporting amounts only											
Outright relief											
Public departments	46	-	-	-	$1,219,137	$1,884,582	$1,330,727	-	-	-	-
Private agencies	42	-	-	-	484,659	1,453,588	7/2,369,027	-	-	-	-
Wage relief											
Public departments	40	-	-	-	937,523	2,228,865	3,262,808	-	-	-	-
Private agencies	21	-	-	-	2,075,224	2,226,267	1,696,416	-	-	-	-
Total wage relief	61	-	-	-	3,012,747	4,455,132	4,959,224	-	11	-	65
Total outright and wage relief reported by all agencies	6/ 917	-	-	-	$14,097,399	$21,843,116	$22,302,792	-	2	-	58

1/ These figures include some mothers' aid, some aid for the blind, and perhaps some veterans' relief.
2/ These figures are heavily weighted by the New York Department of Public Welfare, which, in January, 1932, drastically curtailed relief to veterans. Payments to veterans by this department were: January, 1931, $238,882 to 4,409 families; December, 1931, $634,294 to 11,357 families; January, 1932, $130,164 to 2,702 families.
3/ As some offices administering aid for the blind make quarterly or semiannual payments, the figures for January, 1932, are not strictly comparable with those for December, 1931; percentages of change are therefore not computed. The figures for December, 1931, are heavily weighted by a semiannual payment of $103,670 for aid to 1,257 blind persons by the New York Department of Public Welfare.
4/ In several cities private agencies are administering small amounts of public funds.
5/ There is some duplication in the number of families aided as reported by a good many cities; percentages of change are therefore not computed.
6/ This figure is larger than the sum of individual agencies, as organizations reporting more than one class of relief are counted more than once.
7/ The Philadelphia Bureau of Unemployment Relief in January, 1932, disbursed $1,055,663 from private funds and was classified as a private agency; prior to this month it was rated as a public department.

(continued from page 1)

Diagrams Reflect Large Expansion over January, 1931.

The first of the two accompanying charts compares the amounts of relief disbursed in January, 1931, December, 1931, and January, 1932, by 917 public and private agencies administering outright and wage relief. The second diagram on page 6 compares the number of families aided in the three months by the 768 agencies reporting on this item. Notwithstanding the fact that the relisf level in January, 1931, had already been forced by the depression to an abnormally high and burdensome level, there have been large gains since that month in both families aided and relief given. The increase from January, 1931, to January, 1932, in families aided (768 agencies) is 53 per cent; the rise in relief given (917 agencies) is 58 per cent.



Public Relief 61 Per Cent of January Total.

Of the $22,302,792 relief bill reported for January, 1932, $13,629,603, or 61 per cent, is classified as public relief. In December, 1931, 62 per cent, and in January, 1931, 64 per cent of the total relief of these same agencies was public.

In several cities, for example--Akron, Cleveland, Columbus, Toledo, Oakland, and San Francisco--where private agencies are administering large public funds, the relief from public sources has been classified as general public relief. However, many other private agencies are subsidized to some extent from public funds. It has not been possible to segregate these smaller subsidies, but it is believed that they would not materially increase the percentage of public relief. In a few cities, notably Detroit and Denver, public agencies are administering some private funds.

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Increase in Payrolls of 65 Per Cent Over January, 1931.

Until the fall of 1930, a full year after the collapse of the stock market, a relatively small amount of relief was administered in the form of work wages. Prior to that time, the work test, designed to detect and discourage malingering, was applied in many cities; but few cities carried on actual work programs to relieve dependent families of the unemployed. Since then, however, work relief has become a major development in relief administration, and in many cities large emergency relief funds have been distributed, continuously or intermittently, in this form. The life of a great many work-relief programs has been short.

As is shown in Table 1, 61 public and private agencies reported payrolls for work-relief wages as follows: January, 1931, $3,012,747; December 1931, $4,455,132; January, 1932, $4,959,224. Of these amounts, $3,262,808, $2,228,865, and $937,523, respectively, were from public funds. In January, 1932, 22 per cent of the total reported relief was given as work wages. In the previous month the percentage was 20, and in January, 1931, 21.

Comparative Statistics for 92 Cities in Table 2.

Table 2 presents comparative statistics on relief expenditures for 92 cities for which complete or substantially complete reports were received in time for tabulation. These cities, representing every section of the United States, range in size from Asheville with 50,193 inhabitants to New York with 6,930,446. Percentages of change from both January, 1931, and December, 1931, to January, 1932, have been computed for each city. For the group the median change from December to January, 1932, is an increase of 10 per cent; and from January, 1931, to January of this year, an increase of 73 per cent. In both comparisons the median percentages are higher than those based on the aggregate figures for agencies in all cities.

Striking increases in this January over January, 1931, are shown by several cities, as follows: New Orleans, 832 per cent; Mobile, 433 per cent; Providence, 289 per cent; Altoona, 235 per cent; Tulsa, 233 per cent; Pittsburgh, 222 per cent; Syracuse, 211 per cent; Bethlehem, 205 per cent. In

(continued on page 6)

Table 2. - Expenditures for outright and wage relief in January, 1932, and comparison with January, 1931, and December, 1931 -- 92 cities

The cities included in this table are those for which reports are believed to be complete or substantially complete. Unreported emergency relief in important amounts may have been given in some cities. These figures are presented subject to revision.

City and geographical division	Agencies or divisions of departments reporting	Amount of outright and wage relief			Per cent increase or decrease from		Amount of wage relief		
		January 1931	December 1931	January 1932	Dec., 1931 to Jan., 1932	Jan., 1931 to Jan., 1932	January 1931	December 1931	January 1932
New England									
Portland	6	1/	$20,868	$15,699	-25	1/	1/	-	-
Boston	13	$639,037	1,000,156	974,762	-3	53	-	-	-
Brockton 2/	10	30,019	47,333	49,152	4	64	2,616	-	-
Fall River	7	86,777	104,115	106,329	2	23	-	-	-
Lynn	9	56,610	75,020	95,537	27	69	-	-	-
Malden	6	21,123	33,941	36,575	8	73	-	-	-
New Bedford	7	83,029	82,095	89,002	8	7	-	-	-
Newton	9	1/	20,991	22,958	9	1/	1/	5,297	7,410
Springfield	12	75,254	99,740	107,255	8	43	-	-	-
Worcester	8	121,138	151,155	171,544	13	42	-	-	-
Providence 2/	11	38,713	112,987	150,630	33	289	-	49,734	80,895
Hartford	10	75,051	195,622	222,607	14	197	27,999	37,425	60,182
New Britain	4	28,173	1/	58,348	1/	107	-	-	-
New Haven	10	88,664	100,496	96,703	-4	9	49,000	38,811	42,119
Middle Atlantic									
Albany	12	43,776	62,036	103,390	67	136	-	14,300	58,264
Buffalo	20	500,416	665,449	727,648	9	45	142,500	-	52,655
New Rochelle	7	4,651	8,906	12,346	39	165	-	-	-
New York	26	3,310,308	6,494,080	6,190,611	-5	87	1,522,570	3,104,043	3,323,878
Niagara Falls	8	45,197	60,923	77,492	27	71	15,000	6,668	19,360
Rochester	11	405,813	465,602	535,612	32	15	142,472	-	38,900
Syracuse	13	74,094	333,502	230,697	-31	211	-	143,247	50,455
Allentown	3	20,516	29,492	29,829	1	45	-	-	-
Altoona	4	9,097	23,464	30,452	30	235	-	-	-
Bethlehem 3/	4	5,937	20,678	18,129	-12	205	-	-	-
Chester	9	15,465	19,942	13,114	-34	-15	-	-	-
Erie	7	29,432	56,967	62,612	10	113	-	-	4,916
Lancaster	5	5,943	14,031	12,782	-9	115	-	-	-
Philadelphia	15	538,247	1,052,071	1,159,211	10	115	137,600	-	-
Pittsburgh	10	181,979	568,827	585,892	3	222	-	223,000	246,000
Scranton	15	20,767	38,539	38,793	1	87	-	-	-
Wilkes-Barre 2/	4	36,155	53,725	80,728	50	123	-	-	-
East North Central									
Akron	10	60,749	65,471	101,640	55	67	-	5,468	43,512
Cincinnati	15	119,751	213,504	296,101	39	147	25,000	46,990	56,271
Cleveland	9	338,272	540,497	551,245	2	63	75,240	-	-
Columbus 2/	12	63,850	70,431	79,739	13	25	-	-	9,916
Dayton	11	98,821	56,936	79,201	39	-20	58,031	6,142	6,567
Toledo	4	161,334	182,607	143,142	-11	-22	56,774	-	-
Evansville	4	40,826	25,530	28,335	11	-31	-	-	-
South Bend	6	39,152	57,478	54,194	-6	38	-	-	-
Terre Haute	6	13,765	12,349	14,576	18	6	-	-	-
Chicago	18	1,031,452	2,576,997	2,500,943	-3	142	284,663	-	4/
Cicero	4	7,470	14,265	16,713	17	124	-	-	-
Evanston	4	7,732	16,053	16,624	4	115	190	-	-
Oak Park	3	1,435	2,879	3,036	5	112	-	-	-
Springfield, Ill. 2/	7	15,187	13,921	14,755	6	-3	3,036	-	-
Detroit	16	2,088,850	1,029,301	1,034,870	1	-50	-	371,200	383,849

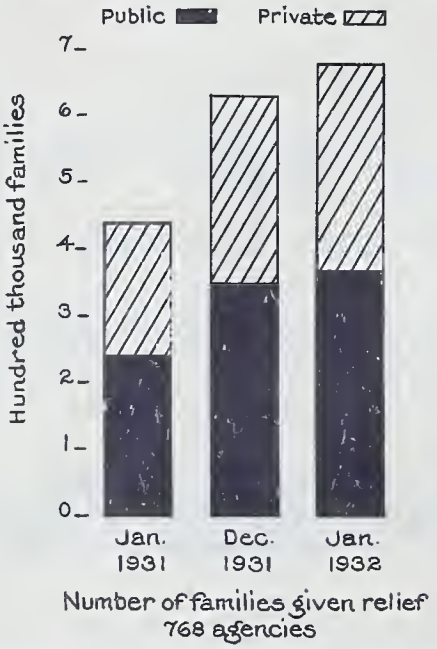
Detroit	12	547,809	580,991	578,514	10	99	80,000	59,294	129,778
Milwaukee	7	43,065	87,645	79,479	-9	85	-	-	-
Racine	5								
West North Central									
Duluth	9	27,351	48,107	67,008	39	145	-	6/ 11,000	24,000
Minneapolis	11	89,559	230,704	248,481	8	177	-	4/ 29,168	4/ 15,339
St. Paul	11	65,500	69,928	93,727	34	43	-	-	-
Des Moines 2/	11	21,797	28,854	39,899	38	83	-	1,560	-
Sioux City	9	10,275	32,165	32,141	7/	213	-	17,482	10,563
Kansas City, Mo.	12	43,611	115,023	98,416	-14	126	-	5,790	3,207
St. Louis	14	104,635	233,952	243,534	4	133	1,691	-	-
Omaha	11	26,742	45,099	53,290	18	99	-	-	-
Kansas City, Kans.	4	10,404	11,050	14,897	35	43	-	-	-
Topeka	3	1/	7,989	8,718	9	-	1/	-	-
Wichita 2/	7	15,507	16,480	38,899	136	151	-	5,062	27,354
South Atlantic									
Wilmington 2/	5	68,397	87,135	119,118	37	74	50,000	52,003	72,282
Baltimore 2/	8	80,392	127,092	180,800	42	125	-	-	-
Washington, D. C.	12	41,889	73,739	110,318	50	163	7,656	26,990	54,940
Norfolk	9	6,954	5,405	14,109	161	103	2,500	-	-
Richmond	7	15,678	28,124	29,905	6	91	-	-	-
Roanoke	4	4,578	4,209	4,049	-4	-12	-	-	-
Huntington	7	6,793	4,784	8,148	70	20	-	-	3,455
Asheville	3	1/	4,756	7,407	56	1/	1/	-	-
Winston-Salem	2	11,650	5,284	5,909	12	-49	-	-	-
Charleston	5	2,062	1,120	1,176	5	-43	-	-	-
East South Central									
Louisville 2/	9	78,544	57,142	63,648	11	-19	30,936	29,529	35,013
Knoxville	4	12,653	11,583	12,703	10	4/	-	9,185	10,297
Memphis	7	39,706	18,106	12,238	-32	-69	7,596	-	-
Nashville 2/	3	8,976	10,534	13,584	29	51	-	-	-
Birmingham	3	33,459	68,233	71,259	4	113	12,616	18,906	12,154
Mobile	4	1,291	2,848	6,879	142	433	-	-	4,000
West South Central									
New Orleans 2/	10	5,883	62,372	54,834	-12	832	-	50,743	44,944
Shreveport	5	8,794	4,205	4,959	18	-44	-	-	-
Tulsa 2/	2	6,846	18,550	22,817	23	233	-	-	-
Dallas 2/	6	23,461	28,485	36,954	30	58	-	17,731	25,000
Fort Worth	4	17,434	12,635	21,443	70	23	-	-	-
Houston	7	16,703	25,552	33,160	30	99	-	-	-
Mountain and Pacific									
Seattle	10	1/	1/	94,855	1/	1/	8,447	70,229	10,125
Tacoma	7	17,649	27,690	24,612	-11	39	-	-	-
Portland	7	97,905	249,654	256,643	3	162	60,000	188,550	193,183
Berkeley	7	1/	39,326	38,415	-2	1/	1/	12,459	11,165
Los Angeles 2/	9	437,843	496,490	562,243	13	28	10,086	48,886	40,669
Oakland	8	91,987	137,044	157,434	15	71	-	-	-
Sacramento	8	1/	38,779	46,201	19	-	1/	-	-
San Diego 2/	8	26,348	46,667	45,866	-2	74	-	12,700	12,529
San Francisco	20	229,471	328,220	380,807	16	66	125,200	122,710	146,738

1/ Figures are not available.
2/ Reports of one or more agencies are known to be missing.
3/ In January, 1931, wages amounting to $26,230 were paid to citizens for work done on sewers and water mains. As this is believed to have been ordinary public work rather than relief work it is not included above.
4/ Work relief, administered as an incidental part of the program of one or more agencies, is not included here.
5/ In December, 1931, the City Outdoor Relief Department closed its books and included as December payments bills which would normally have been paid later. This accounts for heavy drop between December and January, 1932.
6/ This is an approximate figure. 7/ Percentage is less than one.

(continued from page 3)

23 additional cities relief in January, 1932, was more than double that in the previous January. In general the smaller cities are those showing the larger increases.

Thirteen cities reported decline from January, 1931, to January, 1932. Conspicuous among these is Detroit, which a year ago distributed $2,088,850 in relief. In January, this year, as a result of a rigid economy program, its disbursements had shrunk to $1,034,870. Despite this decline only three cities, New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia, expended more in January than Detroit.



Of the 92 cities listed in Table 2, 37 reported the operation of work-relief projects in January, 1932, as against 33 cities in January, 1931. In several additional cities private agencies reported some incidental work relief, but this has not been separately tabulated.

Relief in the form of wages in January, 1932, in New York alone, amounted to $3,323,878. This was a little more than half of the total relief for the city. In Philadelphia and Chicago important amounts of work wages were paid in January, 1931, but not in December, nor in January, 1932.

Reports from Thirty-Two Cities Omitted from Table 2.

Thirty-two cities omitted from Table 2 because of incomplete or inadequate data at time of tabulation are listed below. Reports of one or more agencies in each of these cities are included in Table 1.

New England
- Cambridge
- Lawrence
- Lowell
- Somerville
- Bridgeport

Middle Atlantic
- Utica
- Yonkers
- Bayonne
- Camden
- The Oranges
- Jersey City
- Newark
- Paterson
- Trenton
- Harrisburg
- Reading

East North Central
- Canton
- Youngstown
- Fort Wayne
- Indianapolis
- Flint
- Grand Rapids
- Saginaw
- Madison

South Atlantic
- Atlanta
- Jacksonville
- Miami

West South Central
- Oklahoma City
- El Paso
- San Antonio

Mountain and Pacific
- Denver
- Salt Lake City

Two Series on Meals and Lodgings to be Developed.

In addition to the data on relief to families in their homes, figures are being collected concerning the number of meals served and the number of night's lodgings provided monthly by agencies caring for transient and homeless persons.

In January, 1932, reports on meals and lodgings were received from 169 agencies in 63 cities. The number of night's lodgings reported by these agencies was: 302,913 in January, 1931; 418,872 in December, 1931; and 467,883 in January, 1932. These figures represent an increase from December to January of this year, of 12 per cent, and from last January to this, of 54 per cent. The number of meals reported served was 1,457,990 in January, 1932, as against 1,340,613 in December, 1931, and 847,851 in January, 1931. The increase in January, 1932, over December, 1931, was 9 per cent and over January, 1931, 72 per cent.

The main types of agencies providing for transients are police stations and jails, municipal lodging houses, the Salvation Army, family societies, and missions. Data on meals and lodgings are now complete for relatively few of the larger cities. It is expected, however, that figures on these two items will later be published monthly for individual cities.